

**Minutes of the Meeting
May 21, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Downtown Circulation Study
East Pine Street Substation
West Galer Street Flyover
Alaskan Way Trees
African American Academy
WSCTC Expansion (streetscape briefing)

Convened: 9:00 am

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Commissioners Present

Barbara Swift, Chair
Carolyn Darwish
Gail Dubrow
Bob Foley
Gerald Hansmire
Jon Layzer
Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Marcia Wagoner
Peter Aylsworth
Michael Read
Rebecca Walls

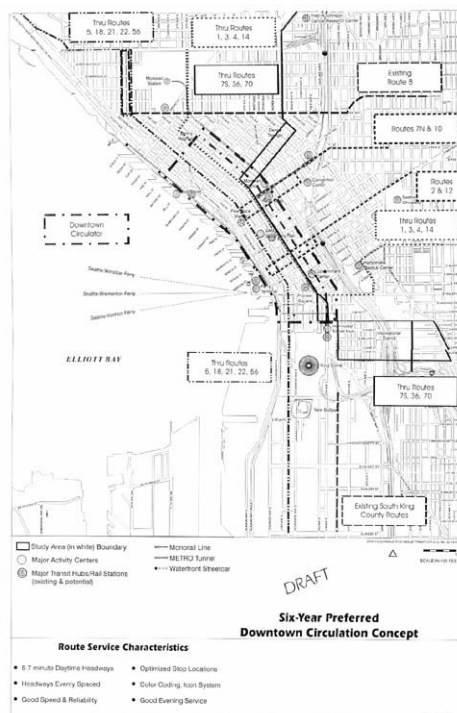
052198.1 Project: **Downtown Circulation Study**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Jeff Bender, Seattle Transportation
 Tom Albro, Downtown Circulation Advisory Group Chair
 Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

The Downtown Circulation Advisory Group is comprised of downtown residents, employer, government agency representatives, and special interests. The Group has been meeting since early summer of 1997 and will soon be formalizing their recommendations in a draft document. The Downtown Circulation study will identify ways to improve internal downtown Seattle transit, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. It will focus on improving connection between important downtown area regional destinations and passenger facilities such as Seattle Center, Convention Center, Ferry Terminal, Transit tunnel, King Street Station, and the stadiums. It will also identify ways to improve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian, connections, between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

The study is funded through a Federal Transportation Administration grant of \$148,000.

The study is intended to address identified issues such as resident frustration with local downtown service being difficult to understand and utilize, employer support of improved transit access to businesses for customers and employees that doesn't limit vehicular access, special interests like ferry riders and bicyclists want improved bicycle and transit connections. Other issues identified are the preferred scenario for the downtown monorail, bus tunnel closure, suburban bus corridors, major transfer locations, and the ride free zone.

The Advisory Group has drafted a preferred circulation concept. It is being presented to stakeholders for their review and comment. A draft report with Seattle Transportation recommendations will be completed this summer.



6-Year Preferred Downtown Circulation Concept

Discussion:

- Dubrow:** I strongly support the goal of rational and efficient Metro transit routes. Have you established priorities for improvements as well as for reallocation of excess resources? I have concerns about designing an elevated system that won't damage the integrity of the historic neighborhoods.
- Bender:** The City hasn't yet established criteria for reallocation of excess resources, although the Transportation Plan currently being reviewed has them. The new Metro route will use up some of the surplus resources created by realigning the existing routes. These surplus resources would probably be redistributed within the downtown Metro subarea.
- Albro:** Political "do-ability" is the major issue with this plan. We want to develop something that has a good chance of being implemented. We are trying to unite the constituency, and see the issues of surplus to be another political arena. The Historic Districts are important to us and we want to have routes along their edges and stations near their neighborhoods.
- Foley:** I enthusiastically support the subject of the study and its intent. Portland is a excellent example of simple, logical, usable service routes. We already understand that the monorail goes to major destinations, and this plan continues that idea with nice simplicity. I am concerned about the general reliance on King County's stewardship regarding city problems and issues. Perhaps the City can assume a more assertive role in its local transit system.
- Bender:** State law prohibits the City from operating its own transit system. This also applies to the new monorail expansion. The City pays King County for the service. King County Metro is the sole provider of transit service in the area.
- Albro:** I agree that our current system is more complicated than in many other cities. If the City changed to a two-way street system it would be easier. We are also concerned with Seattle's relationship with Metro and can see the possibility of creating a local system that addresses these issues in the future. Part of the study dealt with how local interests effect regional issues. The fundamental transit decisions are being made elsewhere without City involvement.
- Swift:** What are the next steps?
- Bender:** We will be completing the draft version of the Advisory Group's recommendations in the next couple of weeks. The final version should be completed sometime this summer. Seattle Transportation and other groups will also be formalizing their recommendations. We hope to have the final version included in the Seattle Transit Initiative. The City is developing a level of expertise in the area of transit systems and service.
- Albro:** We will make sure that the plan dovetails with the Seattle Transit Initiative. We see these recommendations getting active support so that the plan is seriously considered. We also plan to present it to the King County and the RTA Board.
- Dubrow:** There is some debate going on about the way transit systems either de-emphasize or increase economic and racial zoning. The plan seems to have some unutilized opportunities for weaving the Cascade Neighborhood and Central District into the downtown system.
- Albro:** I live in the Central District and agree that there are unrealized opportunities in the plan. We have not yet begun to look at how money can be used in surrounding areas. The Central District is too far away from downtown to be included in this plan.
- Dubrow:** Given the potential for surplus funds with the new plan that will probably be dispersed in surrounding areas, it seems worthwhile to consider ways of weaving transit services between these adjacent areas together.

- Swift:** Is it possible to identify the next steps along the lines of Gail's comments?
- Albro:** Yes, they are very valid comments.
- Wagoner:** Wayfinding will also be a major issue. DSA is dealing with that same issue and plan to implement a plan this year.
- Walls:** The Convention Center Expansion project will also include extensive wayfinding.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the comprehensive nature of the briefing and supports the goals and approach of the project. The Commission looks forward to seeing the project develop in coordination with other planning efforts and urges further consideration of the next steps with attention to possible opportunities and constraints regarding the plan's impact on surrounding communities.**

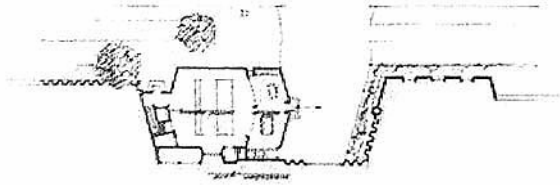
052198.2 Project: **East Pine Street Substation**
 Phase: Schematics
 Presenters: Mike Blanchette, HDR Engineering
 Mark Johnson, Boyle-Wagoner Architects
 Neal Knapper, Seattle City Light
 Chris Larsen: Seattle City Light
 Rhoda Lawrence, Boyle-Wagoner Architects
 Angela Mendolia, Seattle City Light
 Time: 1.5 hr. (0.3%)

The East Pine Street Substation is located between E Union and E Pine Streets, and between 22nd and 23rd Avenues. The substation receives high voltage power, transforms it into lower voltages, and distributes it to Capitol Hill, First Hill, and surrounding hospitals. It is a brick structure, designed by Bassetti Architects in 1966, with a concrete roof over the control room.

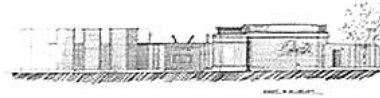
The project includes a 450 square foot addition to the existing control room, remodeling of the basement space, seismic upgrades, and new batteries. The control room addition is divided into two spaces, a break room on the building side and an office on the street side. The addition is a simple extension of the existing plan geometry using concrete instead of brick for the walls and a metal screen parapet.

Another portion of the project, still in schematic phase, involves the viewing tower in the Northwest corner of the site. The space between the tower and the yard wall has become a place of frequent illegal activity and poses a security problem for the neighborhood. The design team has developed three alternatives for dealing with the tower. These include removing the steps around the tower and adding walls between the tower and the yard wall, completely removing the tower and replacing it with landscaping, or simply building up the ground between the tower and the yard wall to a slope and planting a thorny ground cover. These alternatives will be going to the community for an open discussion. The estimated cost of these alternatives ranges from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

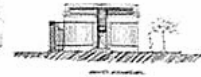
The third and final portion of the project deals with perimeter lighting around the site. The existing up-lighting has deteriorated with age and vandalism. There is concern about the security of the neighborhood and Seattle City Light employees.



Plan of Control Room with Addition



East Elevation



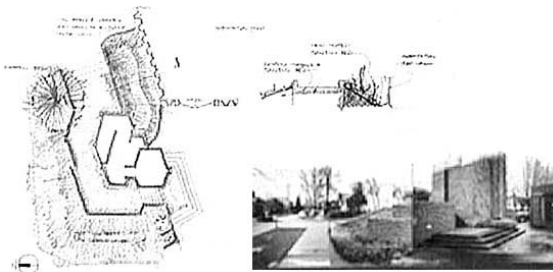
South Elevation

Control Room Discussion:

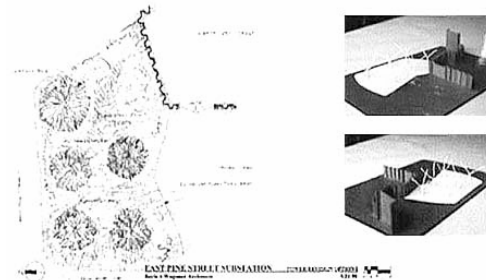
- Darwish:** Has the community been involved in the development of the addition?
- Larsen:** Our plan was to present the project first to the Design Commission, incorporate any comments or recommendations, and then present the revised version to the community. The community is very interested in the viewing tower portion of the project.
- Sundberg:** Has a lighting designer been involved in the project?
- Larsen:** We have asked our consultant to involve a lighting designer.
- Sundberg:** The building is a rather remarkable piece of architecture and changes in the existing lighting will drastically alter its appearances, especially the high pillars. I recommend uplighting that increases safety while meeting the original design intent. I recommend an evaluation of the existing lighting prior to replacing it.
- Blanchette:** The visual impact of the uplighting has to be coupled with the safety issues, primarily in a few dark corners.
- Sundberg:** Creating safe places has to be the number one priority, but the lighting design is critical for maintaining the building's visual impact. In regards to the control room addition, I would consider simplifying the form and reducing the parapet detail. A more modest approach, just a base with a simple cap, would be more sensitive to the existing building.
- Lawrence:** The addition is separated from the existing building by a metal panel. We are trying to continue the line of the existing cap with the new one.
- Sundberg:** I think that the addition cap begins to compete with the existing one.
- Dubrow:** I agree with Rick about the lighting issues. I recommend having a lighting designer develop a way to deal with any additional lighting in a way that respects the intent of the original design and helps the building fit into the neighborhood. Are there constraints that limit the addition to its current location and form?
- Mendolia:** Yes, it has to be a minimum of 16 feet from a row of columns supporting electrically energized buss work. Therefore there is no room for the addition to the west of the control room.
- Dubrow:** Given the location, I wonder if the addition's street presence could be enhanced. Perhaps locating the break room near the street, with windows, could maximize the building's street presence as well as enhance security.
- Foley:** How often is the control room used?
- Mendolia:** There is a crew there eight hours every day with some occasional line service personnel at night.
- Swift:** This building is an exceptional example of the way public buildings are appropriately developed. It is an extraordinary legacy reflecting City Light's commitment to design quality. The existing building has a high degree of texture and detail. The addition will be most successful as a counterpoint to the texture and detail, a simple response that becomes a backdrop to the existing building.

- Blanchette:** Do you have any suggestions for simplifying the cap?
- Sundberg:** I would just think about it as a backdrop to the detail and texture of the existing building, an addition of its time.
- Dubrow:** The concrete cap is not the strongest feature of the building, so don't emphasize it.

Plan/Section of Viewing Tower



Alternative: Keep tower, thorny planting east of tower



Alternative: Replace tower with trees & landscaping

Viewing Tower Discussion:

- Dubrow:** There may be ways to make the addition and the tower projects work together in terms of materials by recycling brick from the tower for the addition. The Phase 3 projects, playground and public open space, should be discussed in conjunction with the viewing tower project.
- Mendolia:** Integrating the projects would help functionally. If we added some space to the yard in conjunction with building something the public might want, it could be a win-win situation.
- Dubrow:** Taking space for yard expansion, while replacing the tower with more public amenities, such as a playground, may do both.
- Sundberg:** The original usefulness for the tower seems to be gone now.
- Dubrow:** It is important to make a civic gesture in replacing the tower.
- Sundberg:** The original intent of the tower was to give the public visual access to the yard. The corner projects should then be considered holistically in terms of meeting this intent of visual public access to the facility.
- Dubrow:** If you replace the tower with a playground, an artist could perhaps integrate electrical artifacts as a way of incorporating the yard facilities into the public space.
- Larsen:** It is important to educate the public in the facility activities.
- Foley:** If the tower is retained, it should remain separate from the wall structure. I like its legibility as a separate element.
- Larsen:** We can instigate the option of sloping the soil between the tower and the wall, with thorny plantings, if an escalated, immediate need to deal with security issues arises.
- Swift:** That sounds like a sound strategy. In terms of a more permanent solution, I urge that you invest the money necessary to gate it in a manner that fits with the structure's appearance. People interpret a chain link system as a lack of investment.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the comprehensive presentation of the control room addition project and the viewing tower project. The Commission also appreciates City Light's continued stewardship of resources within the community and thoughtful ways of engaging the community in design.**

The Commission is sympathetic to the motivations and functional requirements of the control room addition. Given a genuine appreciation of the original architecture, the Commission encourages simplifying the form of the addition's facades and roof, while strengthening the base of the addition as an extension of the existing concrete base. The Commission also recommends adding and orienting control room windows toward the street to enhance neighborhood safety and security.

The Commission also looks forward to seeing further development of alternatives for the viewing tower with consideration of the original intent of providing a public amenity and the opportunity to provide visual public access to the yard.

052198.3 Project: **West Galer Street Flyover**
 Phase: Schematics
 Presenters: Fred L. Beck, Hough Beck & Baird
 Tom Mahoney, CH2M Hill
 Jill Marilley, Seattle Public Utilities
 Juliet Vong, Hough Beck & Baird
 Julia Walton, Arai/Jackson
 Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

The West Galer Street Flyover project consists of a bridge over Elliott Avenue and the railroad tracks with ramps on either side. There will also be improvements to the current bike path frequently used by commuters and pedestrians.

A consultant was hired to evaluate the process and progress of the project to date and presented a summary of the project including goals, and opportunities for art. Three artists are being considered at this time and one will soon be selected.

Goals

- Improve vehicular access to public and private properties west of Elliott Avenue (to support economic goals).
- Improve safety by reducing conflicts between rail and other transportation modes
- Minimize adverse impacts on local businesses and property owners
- Minimize the need to purchase or condemn private property by fully using existing public right-of-way and properties.
- Reduce auto and truck conflicts at the Elliott Avenue West/West Galer Street intersection
- Improve traffic flows between Elliott Avenue West and Magnolia Bridge
- Improve the potential for alternative transit service (e.g. Alaskan Way trolley)
- Minimize the disruption of access and circulation for existing Port tenants
- Use public funds efficiently

Opportunities for art integration

- Railing details
- Artwork in detailing
- Gateway sign near Elliott and Magnolia
- Sculptured lighting fixtures
- Murals on retaining walls
- Plantings that grow up retaining walls in pattern
- Cap beam details (similar to West Seattle Bridge)

Also presented were the reasons for selecting the current alternative over others.

Discussion:

- Swift:** I appreciate the comprehensive nature of the presentation and the effort on the part of the City and the consultant to step back and to address issues previously raised. This project occurs in a growing urban area and therefore requires a multi-disciplinary approach.
- Dubrow:** I am surprised to hear you emphasize the functional aspects of the bridge, given the past actions. What is your perception of our comments and concerns made at the last presentation?
- Marilley:** We brought Julia on as a consultant to review those issues.
- Walton:** The primary issues are centered around multiple modes of transportation. We have tried to give more context and background in this presentation in an effort to confirm the project's ground plane before further developing it.
- Dubrow:** I want the project to involve an urban designer trained to deal with scale, character, and integration of multiple modes of transportation. I have no concerns about the structural design of the bridge, but about how it meets the ground and how the various transportation modes intersect.
- Swift:** The nature of today's presentation helps to lay the foundation. There has been past frustration in understanding the goals and how they were developed. It is a very important project, with major transportation issues, in the midst of a growing urban fabric.
- Dubrow:** The next step would be to start working less in plan and more in elevation and perspective. The project works functionally, but needs further development to be a fantastic public project.
- Swift:** An urban designer, artist, or landscape architect are the kind of professionals that can grapple with human and urban design issues. You currently have this capacity on the team in the landscape architect/urban designer. The scope and fees need to be defined to include this work. This can be a really marvelous project. A book of bridges recently reminded me of how awe inspiring well designed and integrated bridges can be. This project has the potential to become a real civic contribution.
- Foley:** The art program and other details should play on the simplicity of the bridge as a whole, rather than as extraneous decoration.
- Wagoner:** Leaving Elliott there is such a feeling of arrival, I am glad to see attention given to that area as an dramatic entry. I am also amazed at how many people use the waterfront in that area at low tide. Connecting the bike path to the Smith Cove trail is also important. I may be worth exploring the City's plans for a link. I could help the new park area become a stopping point along a route, rather than a terminus.
- Marilley:** That portion of the bike trail is owned by the Port of Seattle.
- Wagoner:** It may be an opportunity to move the project up on their list of priorities.
- Swift:** I appreciate this presentation establishing the foundation for the project, but think that the past action still stands.
- Dubrow:** What are your intentions in terms of an involving an urban designer?
- Marilley:** We have hired a landscape architect, with urban design expertise, and an artist. There simply isn't funding to add an urban designer to the list of consultants.
- Dubrow:** Given the lack of funding, it is important to make it clear that urban design is within the scope of the landscape architect's involvement.
- Swift:** I recommend reviewing the goal statements in terms of framing them in a way that enhances the design beyond functionality.
- Dubrow:** The term "industrial neighborhood" raises flags to me that warn of function being the major issue in a project.

- Swift:** This is the kind of project that will be around for decades, in which the neighborhood may not remain an industrial area.
- Sundberg:** I support Gail and Barb's concerns and comments, and reiterate the importance of a long-term vision for this project.
- Foley:** The design team has done a nice job of developing alignments within the functional constraints of that area.

Action: **The Commission appreciates that the presentation comprehensively established the history and goals of the project. The Commission recognizes that the project has made a positive step toward meeting the goals of the past actions by reevaluating its progress to date, and looks forward to seeing the project develop.**

The actions of March 5th and May 2nd still stand as a framework for further development, with an amendment to last bullet (in bold).

May 2 Action:

The Commission recognizes that the solution performs well functionally. The action taken at the March 5 meeting still stands as a framework for further development. The Commission looks forward to seeing the project early in the design development phase with specific points of the action having been addressed.

March 5 Action:

The Commission appreciates the briefing. The Commission is supportive of the general approach to the project and makes the following recommendations;

- *the Commission recommends continued attention to detail at all levels and especially to the project's scale and urban design features.*
- *the Commission supports the involvement of artists, sooner rather than later.*
- *the Commission also recommends careful attention to the greenbelt restoration and **the development of public open space and landscape improvements in the Myrtle Edwards Park project and recommend greater coordination of the bike trail throughout the area.***

In addition to the previous action, the Commission strongly recommends the early involvement of an urban designer, architect, or landscape architect.

052198.4 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items:

- A. MINUTES OF APRIL 2ND AND APRIL 16TH MEETINGS: Approved as amended.

Announcements:

- B. INTERBAY GOLF CENTER RECEPTION. May 29th
 C. MEETING WITH MAYOR SCHELL: Thursday May 28th at 10:15 AM.
 D. THE FIN PROJECT DEDICATION: May 25th at 1:00 PM.

Discussion Items:

- E. CITY COUNCIL BROWN BAG ON JULY 8TH. Wagoner reported.
 F. LIBRARY WORKSHOP: Swift reported.
 G. MUNICIPAL CENTER UPDATE: Wagoner reported.
 H. OBJECT IN THE RIGHT OF WAY: Swift reported.
 I. NOTION OF CITY ARCHITECT: Swift reported.
 J. RTA FIELD TRIPS TO PORTLAND AND VANCOUVER: Wagoner reported. Scheduled dates are June 4th and June 30th.

052198.5 Project: **Alaskan Way Trees**

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Ben Barnes, Seattle City Light
 Jim Brighton, Jones & Jones
 Kevin Carl, Jones & Jones
 Gary Colburn, Seattle City Light
 Shane Dewald, Seattle Transportation
 Tom Fawthrop, Seattle Public Utilities
 Mike Harrington, Asplundh Tree Co.
 Bill Raymond, Port of Seattle
 Brent Schmidt, Seattle City Light
 Kwan Wong, City Budget Office

Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

The discussion centered around various alternatives ranging from under-grounding the power lines to removing some of the trees.

Under-grounding the power lines would cost approximately \$1.5 million, based on similar work done at King Street. Raising the power lines up on 85 foot high poles is not preferred because maintenance would require using the Condor lift truck that would block off the street during maintenance.

Some costs of the project could possibly be covered by the SR 519 project, which is currently in the 30% design development phase.

The fence will be replaced with a six foot high fence and could be relocated west of the tree line. Some buildings are to be removed to accommodate Port access.

There are 25 trees adjacent to the parking lots that are spaced at three to five trees per pole spacing. South of the parking lots are 29 trees, all younger sycamores. City Light proposes

leaving the 29 southern trees in an effort to coordinate with the SR 519 project, and removing the northern 25 trees. An alternative solution was to selectively remove biggest problem trees and replace them with a more workable species.

The recommended replacement species is a Columnar Red Maple or a Pacific Sunset Maple, both are of medium scale and are manageable under power lines. If maple trees are used, the SR 519 project could also be a source of mature replacement trees.

Discussion:

- Barnes:** London Plane trees are not recommended by the City as street trees. City Light still recommends that the northern 25 trees be removed and replaced with a species chosen by the community.
- Dubrow:** Knowing your stance on the issue, which of the northern 25 trees are the highest priority for removal?
- Barnes:** A new fence raises the cost issues. The real issue is the canopy over the sidewalk. That is why we recommend removing all 25 of the northern trees.
- Swift:** In dealing with this project, people will need to wear multiple hats. On one hand they need to be experts in their field, on the other hand, they are personally invested to a solution somehow. This is not a negotiation, it is an information gathering session. We need to know which of the 25 trees are the highest priority.
- Barnes:** I am very invested in these trees. I would recommend removing the largest ones first. Some of them are still young and small enough to not a major problem at this point. Phasing out the trees is an option as long as the ultimate result is entire replacement with an appropriate species.
- Swift:** How many trees require immediate replacement?
- Barnes:** We should first remove the trees that are three feet from the power poles.
- Swift:** That would be about ten to twelve trees immediately as well as the worst ones at the center between the poles where the wires sag most.
- Dewald:** Is there an opportunity to replace the trees near the poles?
- Barnes:** No. The City requires a 20 foot clearance around poles to allow for the crowns. The photos show some trees actually engulfing the poles.
- Raymond:** It is important that the aesthetics of the tree line as a whole be considered and maintained during phased replacement.
- Dewald:** We recommend using Columnar Red Maple trees, already used next to the viaduct elsewhere. These maples would be for planting along the curblin as street trees in the event that the fence would be along the back of the walk and eliminate the existing trees associated with this sidewalk area. However, the choice to place the fence along the back of the walk is probably not available given current code requirements for parking lots and necessary buffers along streets and sidewalks. If the fence is proposed along the back of the walk, then no curbside row of trees would be recommended at all. The recommended tree choice under the wires would be an Acer Truncatum, either a Pacific Sunset or Norwegian Sunset Maple. These are medium scale trees with broad branching patterns.
- Schmidt:** There are Pacific Sunset Maple trees used south of the London Planes and Maple and Sweet Gum trees to the north of the Planes.
- Barnes:** There is also the possibility that the road-side parking lane could be converted into landscaping, allowing for the trees to be moved out from under the wires. This would also allow for larger trees without hindering the maintenance of the power lines.
- Carl:** Is there potential for under grounding the wires as part of the SR 519 project?

- Colburn:** That project does not currently involve any under grounding and the state ordinance will not pay for under grounding these lines.
- Dubrow:** Between the \$150,000 and the \$1.5 million alternatives there is a sensible solution. What are the pros and cons of using the 85 foot high poles?
- Colburn:** There are significant issues to consider with the 85 foot poles. One is the disruption of views toward the water. Many nearby condominium owners will not be happy with the installation of 85 foot poles. Another issue is the cost to City Light and its customers. City Light would have to spend \$150,000 on the new poles versus the \$14,000 we are spending every three years. Other costs to consider are potential lawsuits and double pay for employees working on poles over 75 feet high. Traffic would also be obstructed during maintenance, with the necessary use of a large truck lift. If 85 foot poles are the only alternative, City Light should just walk away and do nothing.
- Harrington:** Plane trees can reach a height of 90 feet, which would still be above the 85 foot poles.
- Brighton:** Spacing and height are fundamentally aesthetic issues. London Plane trees have a history of close spacing and extensive pruning. They are very substantial and durable street trees. Plane trees have existed in these conditions for over 200 years in Europe. We need to address the trees as part of an infrastructure that enhances the quality of urban life. The functionality of maintaining, moving, or replacing the trees is not more important than the public amenity that the trees provide. The City would be spending more money to remove a public amenity than to maintain the current situation.
- Barnes:** Topping the trees costs about \$14,000 per year. Removing the trees would cost about \$34,000. In six to eight years the City would break even financially, and have new trees that are appropriate in scale and spacing. The City's cost is primarily in pruning and maintaining the trees.
- Dewald:** City Light can't set up a new system for managing these trees throughout the City but there may need to be a process developed to allow neighborhoods to identify specific corridors or sites, such as this one, they would like to see managed under a different standard. The SEATRAN Arborist's office could work together with City Light Vegetation Management and neighborhood planning representatives to identify corridors with potential for this.
- Dubrow:** That seems like a reasonable strategy. Within each neighborhood there is likely to be an area of trees that has special importance and that requires special management. It is hard to judge whether or not these trees are absolutely critical to the neighborhood.
- Swift:** I don't think that we should move forward with the replacement before autumn. There are also some SR 519 issues and opportunities that have not been fully explored. This is also a major vehicular entrance to the city and plays an important urban design role.
- Barnes:** The elimination of the street parking is a great opportunity.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends that the project continue to be pursued with the understanding that achieving the best solution requires reasoned, balanced discussion. Based on the understanding that tree removal and replacement will not occur before fall of 1998, the Commission is interested in seeing the following information;**
- a plan showing the fence relocation in relation to the trees;
 - a plan of the trees that City Light would like replaced;

- a City plan that identifies possible SR 519 involvement;
- further pursuit of the 85 foot high poles;
- use of street parking spaces on the north end as a way to separate the trees from the poles.

052198.6 Project: **Transition - SDC Executive Director**
 Phase: Discussion
 Presenters: Barb Swift, Design Commission Chair
 Michael Read, Design Commission staff
 Nora Connors
 Commissioners
 Time: .5 hr. (hourly)

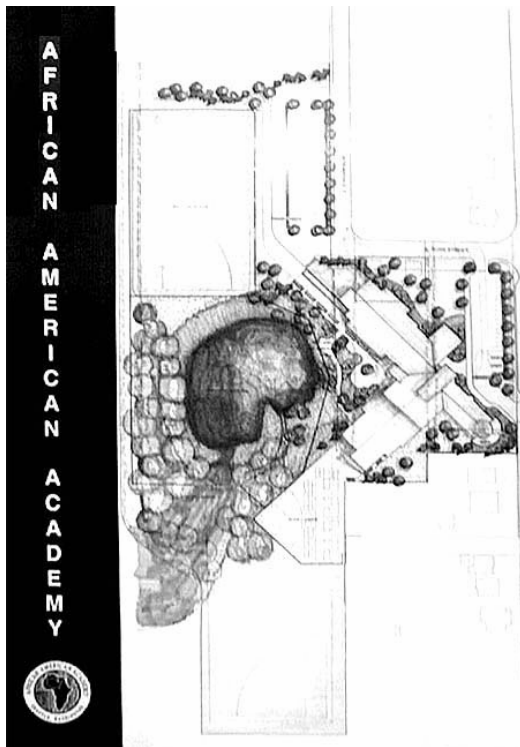
The Commission discussed the process for selecting and hiring a new executive director. Marcia Wagoner will end her 13 year legacy as executive director of the Commission on Friday, May 29. Michael Read will function as acting director while the search for a replacement is underway. The Commission appreciates the information and assistance of Nora Connors during this transition.

052198.7 Project: **African American Academy**
 Phase: Street Vacation
 Presenters: Pirayeh Long, Heery International
 Sam Cameron, Streeeter & Associates
 Don Gilmore, Seattle School District
 Beverly Barnett, Seattle Transportation
 Attendees: Moira Gray, Seattle Transportation
 Marilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation
 Time: .5 hr. (0.3%)

The African American Academy is located between Beacon Avenue and 32nd Avenue South, and between South Monroe Street and South Thistle Street. The project is in the permitting phase and construction documents have been completed. The total budget is approximately \$14 million. The program is based on a total of 750 students requiring approximately 99,000 square feet. The program includes community spaces; soccer field, gymnasium, lecture hall, LRC/library, cafeteria, playgrounds, a wetland, daycare center, and parking. The project will also include street improvements to 34th Avenue South, South Rose Street, and South Thistle Street.

The street vacations requested include vacation of 32nd Avenue south of Monroe Street, a partial vacation of 34th Avenue between Rose Street and Thistle Street, and a partial vacation of the alley between Rose and Thistle Streets.

The Academy requires a 12 acre site with no intervening streets. The proposed location was the only site in the desired vicinity that satisfied those requirements.



Site Plan



NORTH ELEVATION



ENTRY LEVEL PLAN
1/8\"/>



Floor Plan and North Elevation

Discussion:

- Batra:** The 97,000 square feet equates to about 15 square feet per student. Is that a standard figure?
- Gilmore:** The 15 feet per student exceeds the state requirements. It was set by a local board decision to exceed the standard, which was not really large enough to meet the spatial needs.
- Batra:** Why limit the number of students to 750 if the building is large enough to accommodate more?
- Gilmore:** The board established the number of students and required spatial needs based on recommendations from the community, consultants, and staff. The Academy has three sections of each class. 750 students seemed like a feasible limit for the Academy. A significant increase in the number of students requires a increase in administrators, meals, nurses, etc.
- Dubrow:** My sense is that there is a lot of public benefit in the building with the community spaces, computer labs, play fields, and auditorium. It is difficult to comment on the street vacations without a plan showing the streets and ROW's to be vacated.. I appreciate the layout of the building and the environmental layout of the wetlands. However, I am having difficulty in evaluating the building's contextual fit without any information on the larger context.
- Cameron:** The context of the adjacent residences is basically single and two story houses with various exterior treatments. Keeping the facade angled off of Beacon Avenue gives the building some street presence without being overpowering.
- Dubrow:** It is unusual to see a building of this size set at an angle to the main street. Most old school buildings have a dominant street presence in the neighborhood by facing parallel to the street. The street presence of this school may need to be enhanced.

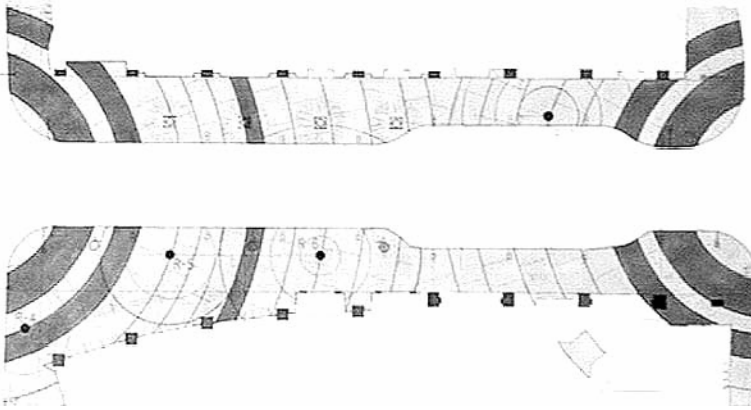
- Gilmore:** The building's site location and orientation, as well as the facade treatments, are based on extensive input from the community and the City. We have made great efforts to fit the building into the community, which has supported the current plan.
- Darwish:** I am concerned about lighting around the site and the potential graffiti problems.
- Cameron:** Graffiti is an issue for us as well. The design has a limited amount of blank wall surface, perimeter up-lighting, and an anti-gravity sealer on the concrete block.
- Swift:** The Design Commission has been interested in public schools and appreciates the opportunity to see the plans for this Academy. I sense that there is quite a return to the public within the facility in return for vacating the necessary ROW's. It is fair to say that the amenities will probably not meet the public need and I look to the school district to continue the effort to make, what are public facilities, open to the public whenever possible.
- Gilmore:** The Parks Department schedules all school gymnasium and play field use after hours. We assume that this facility will also be scheduled through them. A person can contact the principal for information about public use of the facility.
- Action:** **The Commission has determined that this project constitutes a clear public benefit and therefore recommends approval of the street vacations.**

052198.8 Project: **WSCTC - Streetscape briefing**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Chuck Hartung, WSCTC
 Mark Hinshaw, LMN Architects
 Carolyn Law, Art coordinator
 Kenichi Nakano, Nakano-Dennis
 Attendees: Beverly Barnett, Seattle Transportation
 Shane Dewald, Seattle Transportation
 Ryan Durkan, Hillis Clark
 Chris Easeman, LMN Architects
 Moira Gray, Seattle Transportation
 Matt Lampe, Executive Services Department
 Don Nelson, Seattle Transportation
 Marilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation
 Gerry Willhelm, Seattle Transportation
 Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

The presentation served as an update on the status of the streetscape improvements, particularly the paving pattern, sculptures, seating areas, and street trees, as well as a response to street use permit issues raised by City staff. The construction documents are near completion and the project will begin the permitting process in another month.

Paving Pattern

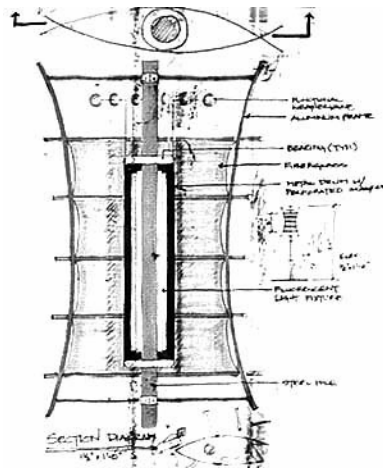
The paving pattern, unchanged since previously presented, consists of concentric rings of colored concrete centered on the three major Pike Street intersections. The colors for the concrete will be a buff color and a light charcoal with silicon carbide. Some of the concrete will be sand-blasted to get a rough texture. Stone inserts will mark the placement of the vertical sculpture elements, allowing for some flexibility in the sculpture locations at this point. The expansion joints will radiate subtly from the three intersection centers. The paving pattern will extend into the main lobby space to the bank of elevators for the office tower.



Paving Pattern along Pike Street between 7th and 8th Avenues

Vertical Sculptures

Three sculptures will be located to relate to Convention Center entrances, one will be outside of the MOHAI entrance, one will be on the east side of Ninth Avenue, and the final one will relate to the stair path leading to freeway park. This last sculpture may be eliminated due to budget constraints. The vertical sculptures have been redesigned. They are less flamboyant, and more restrained versions of the previous design. The stainless steel poles support a steel framework lantern element at the top that has an amber cast light inside. Above the lantern elements will be bowl-shaped wind detectors. The base still has a four foot diameter information kiosk. The material colors are more muted than the last design. The height of the sculptures will still vary from higher at the west end to lower at the east end.



Lantern atop vertical sculptures

The fire exit door treatment has been developed into an enlarged honeycomb pattern with two colors per door. The background color will be metallic, and an overlay of a different tone.

Seating areas

In a response to safety concerns regarding the proposed seating along the Pike Street curb, the design team rearranged the seating to be concentrated near the building facade. Each table can have three chairs around it. During heavy flow times there can be 18 to 20 tables, 54 to 60 seats, near the building exterior. During moderate flow times there can be 40 to 50 tables, 120 to 150 seats, along the exterior and interior of the facade. During light flow times there can be 50 to 60 tables, 150 to 180 seats along the interior and exterior of the north wall. The furniture will be movable and can therefore be adjusted to accommodate various needs.

Street Trees:

The landscape architect met with Seattle Transportation to discuss the opportunities for additional street trees and agreed on a conceptual layout for these additional trees. The previous plan called for 38 trees, spaced on the structural grid of the buildings at 18 feet on center. The circular paving pattern lessens the rigidity of the geometry and allows for more variation of tree locations. The actual tree locations will become more definite as other elements, such as the sculptures, and lights are established.

The current plan has designated 38 columnar Red Maple trees primarily on Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Avenues. The increased number of trees is contingent on the tighter spacing of approximately 18 feet. The trees may also need to be six and a half feet from the curb, less than the required seven feet and a half feet. The proposed tree grates are circular along Pike Street and rectangular along Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Avenues. Due to budget constraints and the fact that Pike Street already has five different grate styles, the grate will be standard bronze casts.

Discussion:

- Barnett:** My major concerns regarding the street use permit have been the need to maximize the amount of landscaping and pedestrian scale elements, street tree locations and the possible use of vertical sculptures instead, and the location of seating near the curb line. I think it is a good idea to have the seating moved back against the building.
- Willhelm:** I have concerns about having stationary pedestrians, sitting or standing close to the moving traffic. The flows of moving pedestrians should be closer to the moving traffic, keeping the seating areas near the building. As long as the bollards are more than three feet from the curb, I am not worried about them.
- Nelson:** From a regulatory point of view, the permit is grantable for tables and chairs near the building, at least ten to twelve feet from the curb. The art elements are easily allowed, given that they are to be over 20 feet high. As far as the discretionary decision of reducing the number of street trees in exchange for having the sculpture elements, I would refer to comment from the landscape architects and Design Commissioners. The curb bollards seem unnecessary when the seating is near the building.
- Dewald:** The code requirements for street trees are based on environmental benefits as well as aesthetic benefits. If the sculpture elements don't meet the environmental requirements, we need to look at other ways to meet them. I have provided the design team with information on waving the requirements in one area to be met in another area.
- Nelson:** The decorative paving pattern is within acceptable standards in terms of finish and color, as long as the stone is not slippery. The pattern, however, can not extend into the curb or street.
- Dubrow:** Why can't it extend into the curb?
- Nelson:** Because the curbs are owned and maintained by the City.
- Dubrow:** Why is new design for the vertical sculpture elements so much more restrained than the last version?
- Law:** It is only another conceptual starting point for the artists. I will be sure to get any comments you have back to them.
- Dubrow:** Without understanding the motive for the drastic conceptual change, I wonder about the muted colors and form. There is so much geometric patterning on the ground plane, I am a little disappointed at the lack of exuberance in the sculptures.
- Sundberg:** Will street trees survive under the vault?

- Dewald:** It is an unusual situation. They may survive, but don't offer the environmental benefits under the canopy. That is why we are open to making up that benefit in another area.
- Swift:** I appreciate the holistic approach to this project and the degree of flexibility on the part of City staff.
- Hansmire:** Without the street trees under the galleria, there is an opportunity for the sculptures to be exciting and to really enliven the volume. The redesign seems to lack the intrigue and exhilaration of the past designs. Vibrant colors could really enliven the lower, pedestrian zones of the space.
- Foley:** I agree with the placement of trees on the north side of the ROW and not immediately in front of the Convention Center entry. I don't mind the restrained approach to the art. The selection of paving materials seems to make sense.
- Law:** I feel comfortable with not trying to extend the paving pattern across the street. It is visible from across the street and still unifies the space.
- Dubrow:** The hardest issue for me to resolve is the bollards and tables at the street edge. I have been torn in the past between having the seating at the building edge and the curb. It is more than a safety issue; it is an issue of reinforcing the public nature of the space. I am not as fearful of cars driving through bollards and over people. I think we should trust parents to make wise choices on where to sit with their children. The regulations seem to be pushed to the point of being overly careful. I think we should defer to the designers about where seating is located.
- Hansmire:** There is a potential for accidents between pedestrians and vehicles on any sidewalk. I personally wouldn't feel uncomfortable about sitting near the curb because of noise and dirt. It is not so much a safety issue to me either. The seating is movable, and we should expect the public to adjust the locations to fit their comfort levels.
- Swift:** Given that the galleria space has a high arching cover, wide, patterned sidewalks, and furniture, the ten to twelve foot side safety zone between the street and the seating areas is frankly not appropriate. The classic three to four foot wide zone is more reasonable. A twelve foot wide zone is counter to the objectives of creating a vibrant, pedestrian oriented space.
- Lampe:** Gerry has expressed some willingness to be flexible, but needs a sense of the space to evaluate the design from a practical standpoint. He could relax the boundaries after the basic design works.
- Willhelm:** I am not as concerned about cars driving on the sidewalk as I am about relaxed pedestrians not paying attention. During low volume periods, furniture can be moved out further.
- Hartung:** The vertical sculpture elements create a zone approximately eight feet from the curb that could become the safety zone. We will have to play it by use, starting at the building and moving outward as appropriate. We have proposed an 18 month period after the building is occupied to experiment with potential solutions to the seating location issue. The artists are not necessarily interested in developing a row of artistic bollards.
- Swift:** I think that the row of bollards is unnecessary at this point.
- Darwish:** Who will regulate and enforce the location of seating areas, given that they are movable?
- Hinshaw:** The Convention Center will not become the table police. There will probably be periodic straightening up of the tables and chairs into their intended locations.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends approval of the project as presented. The Commission makes the following comments and recommendations.**

- **reconsider the issue of vitality and spatial presence of the sculpture columns, both in color and form;**
- **the Commission would like to see a relaxation of the determination regarding the width of a safety zone between the street and seating areas and does not believe there is a need to install bollards along the curb;**
- **given the goal of creating a pedestrian oriented space not dominated by vehicles, the Commission would like a briefing on the determination regarding the safety zone and location of public seating,;**
- **if traffic is a concern, investigate traffic calming devices that are consistent with the design principles identified for the project.**